THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Honourable Members, I would like to take the House into confidence that at 10.30 there was a meeting of the leaders of all parties in the Chairman's chamber, and the decision was that we will adjourn till 2.30 for lunch and wait for the business from the Lok Sabha to come over here.

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: Thank you... (*Interruptions*)...

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Please wait. The House is not yet adjourned. I am still sitting in the Chair. You don't have to walk out... (*Interruptions*)... We have to adopt a motion.

MOTION FOR EXTENSION OF TIME FOR PRESENTATION OF THE REPORT OF THE JOINT COMMITTEE OF THE HOUSES ON THE ACQUIRED IMMUNO DEFICIENCY SYNDROME (AIDS) BILL, 1989

SHRI MOHINDER SINGH LATHER (Haryana): Madam, I beg to move the following Motion:—

"That the time appointed for presentation of the Report of the Joint Committee of the Houses on the Acquired Immuno Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) Prevention Bill, 1989, be extended up to the ,first day of the last week of the Hundred and Sixtieth Session of the Rajya Sabha.

The question was put and the motion was adopted.

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†WRITTEN ANSWERS TO STARRED AND UNSTARRED QUESTIONS SET FOR THE 7TH MARCH, 1991.

Rate of inflation

*161. SHRIMATI VEENA VERMA: SHRI KAPIL VERMA:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleasd to state:

(a) what was the rate of inflation based on whole sale price index for the week ended on February 23, what was it three months ago and what is it likely to be at the end of current year going by current trends;

(b) what is the estimated increase in internal and external debt during this year upto the end of March, 1991; and

(c) what steps are being taken to bring down the prices?

THE FINANCE MINISTER SHRI YASHWANT SINHA): (a) The annual rate of inuation in terms of the Wholesale Price Index as on the week ending February 16, 1991 (latest available) was 12.6 per cent as against 10.6 per cent three months ago on the week ending November 17, 1990. The inflation rate at the end of the current financial year, in terms of the WPI, is expected to be in the range of 12.5 per cent.

(b) The outstanding internal debt, inclusive of all liabilities of the Central Government, is estimated to increase from Rs. 2,39,850 crores at the end of March, 1990 to Rs. 2,79,528 crores at the end of March, 1991 (RE). The estimated total external debt outstanding as on 31 March, 1990, valued at end-March exchange rates, was Rs. 79,982 crores. The position on total external debt as on 31-3-1991 will be known only after the close of the financial year 1990-91.

(c) The Government have adopted a multipronged strategy to bring down prices. The steps taken to check the rise in prices and the inflationary trend in the economy include strict fiscal discipline through monitoring of Government expenditure, check on expansion of money supply, more effective management of supply and demand of essential/sensitive commodities and a strict action aaginst hoarders and profiteers.

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†The sitting of the Rajya Sabha on Thursday the 7th March, 1991 was cancelled. Answer to Questions put down in the lists for that day were laid on the Table of the House on Monday, the 11th March, 1991.